



A Word from Ruth Tschudin (1943—)

- \* Founder and trustee of Open Doors
- \* Educator, Author, Biblical Storyteller
- \* Facilitator of Worldwide Read-Thru 2013.

Come, read with me in 2013! See what the Good Book has to say to *you personally* at this time in your life. See what you can learn about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Jewish/Christian connection... and so much more. You will be amazed at what these sixty-six wonderful Books have to offer: knowledge, wisdom, inspiration, comfort, guidance, challenge, hope, forgiveness and a peace that passes understanding.

My love affair with the Bible started when my sister (4th-grader) and I (3rd-grader) recited the names of all 66 Books--plus the Beatitudes, Lord's Prayer, 23rd Psalm and Ten Commandments—in order to earn cross-shaped bookmarks lovingly crocheted by physically blind believers. Then came Methodist summer camp which included a “morning watch” that sent us outside at sunrise to greet the Lord one-on-One. My Bible came with me, and just holding it close during those precious quiet times impacted my soul in a way that I treasure to this day.

Further down the road, at age 13, I euphorically descended down flight after flight of stairs in the Yankee Stadium to respond to Billy Graham's invitation to live for Christ (and started by reading the recommended Gospel of John). My parents went forward, too, and thereafter I'd see them reading together from their Revised Standard translation each evening. I'd see my sister sitting in bed at night reading her Bible, too.

In high school there were Bible-based Young Life meetings with songs I still sing today. In college I attended my first Bible study; and as an adult I was influenced by many of Norman Vincent Peale's favorite Scriptures. It was my “agnostic” husband's idea that we attend Dr. Peale's church early in our marriage when we lived in NYC. Hugo promised to always encourage me in my faith (which he has), and he even gave me the new (at that time) paraphrased Living Bible, which gave me the confidence and inspiration to finally read the entire Bible—with the help of one-year guides like “Bible Pathway” and “The Daily Walk.”

The Bible added so much depth and joy to my life I just had to share it. So I began organizing Bible studies and Read-Thrus when inspired to do so. I also joined the Network of Biblical Storytellers, learning the Books of Mark, James and Jonah, the Love Chapter/I Corinthians 13, Psalm 139 and the Prodigal Son story by heart (while trying to involve others). Our church's dramatic group *The Good Book Players*, for example, raised \$1,000+ for the homeless with its luncheon performance of the Contemporary English Version of *Jonah* (with added flourishes like music, props, and humor).

It's been more than a decade since the last Read-Thru. So, when my new friend Lenore expressed a desire to read her Bible from cover to cover, our 2013 Worldwide Read-Thru was conceived! We've scheduled the readings in what we consider to be an improved format compared to former Read-Thrus. We're encouraging people to view each Book as a separate entity that stands on its own. The Psalms and Proverbs, however, are treated differently. Readers are encouraged to read just a few chapters of these each month because these beloved Scriptures, revered and loved by Jews and Christians alike, are meant to be savored (and the Psalms even sung!), repeated often and applied in life-changing, heart-warming ways.

There's no official sign-up, no big commitment. Just read whatever parts interest you each month: whatever you read is more than you would have. If you feel like commenting or sharing, you can do so via our feedback tab. Read the Bible of your choice. I think perhaps I'll read the one I got in second grade (it's the old King James Version and it's literally falling apart)...or maybe I'll read my parents' Bible, the Revised Standard one...or I might finally read Eugene Peterson's paraphrased “Message”...but most likely I'll opt for my bigger-print New International Version—great for seniors like me!